

Somerset Future Transport Plan Equalities Impact Assessment

January 2011

For more information please contact:

Lucy Bath, Transport Policy Team Leader: LBath@somerset.gov.uk or
Stephen Walford, Transport Policy Manager: SWalford@somerset.gov.uk

WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK



POLICY/SERVICE:

Future Transport Plan
Transport Policy, Strategic Planning

REVIEW DATE:

January 2011

GENERAL DUTY ASSESSMENT: High year 1(02)

GROUPS THAT THE POLICY OR SERVICE IS TARGETED AT:

All groups travelling within Somerset should benefit from the implementation of the plan over the 15-year period. It is possible that some groups may be affected either positively or negatively by specific policies and a full analysis of this has been undertaken (see Conclusions).

The Future Transport Plan 2011 (FTP) document itself is primarily targeted at members of the public and is presented in clear English and is easy to read. The FTPs accompanying technical notes have been developed (based on the Department for Transport (DfTs) guidance notes) to provide a sound evidence base for the policies and strategies and to ensure that statutory requirements are met. These documents are targeted more at Government agencies and our transport colleagues and partners.

Summary of groups that may have an interest in the FTP:

- Stakeholders and members of the public;
- County councillors;
- District councillors (throughout Somerset);
- Parish/Town Councils and other local interest groups;
- Government agencies and departments;
- Developers and businesses.

EVIDENCE AND DATA USED FOR ASSESSMENT:

The aim of this Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to ensure that the policies and outcomes of the FTP do not discriminate against an individual or community and if possible helps to improve equality. The assessment has considered the impact on a number of target groups with 'protected characteristics' as outlined in the 2010 Equalities Act (to be adopted in April 2011):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition, to ensure the prevention of social exclusion, the following have also been considered¹:

- Areas of high deprivation
- Those on low income
- People without access to a motor vehicle
- Rural areas

Each of these categories was considered against each of the policies within the FTP's Technical Note – Schedule of Policies. A summary of the outcomes can be found in the Conclusions section below.

Consultation

As well as the evidence base we have collected for the FTP, the development of our challenges and policies has taken into account the outcome of our consultations with identified stakeholders including:

- Members of the public;
- County Council Members;
- Disability Groups;
- Parish/Town Councils; and
- District Council Officers and Members.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN ABOUT THE IMPACT OF POLICY ON DIFFERENT GROUPS:

Impact of FTP Policy

The Policies of the FTP will have an impact on all groups as identified above, however, the impact will be greater on some and these have been identified in the detailed table below.

¹ Making the Connections: The Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion.

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment Table

Policy Outline (policy number ²)	Groups Affected	Description of impact / Mitigation (if required)	Potential Positive/Negative impact
The things we can help you do			
<p>Community and Partnership Involvement (1) We will help our communities to help themselves. We will help them to make improvements to transport, allow them to shape our work and deliver improvements in partnership with other organisations.</p>	<p>Rural communities. Ethnic minorities. People with learning or mental disabilities.</p>	<p>Improving the opportunity for rural communities to access facilities thereby increasing their accessibility. By engaging with the local community there is opportunity for improved integration. It may be difficult for those with learning or mental disabilities to engage with community involvement. Where this is identified support groups will be contacted to help encourage involvement.</p>	<p>+ + -</p>
<p>Smarter Choices (6) We will help people make smarter travel choices. We will provide high quality transport information and encourage organisations to develop 'Travel Plans'.</p>	<p>Areas of high deprivation and low car ownership. Women. People with a disability. Young people. Older people. Ethnic minorities.</p>	<p>Improving the transport choices particularly to those reliant on public transport and active travel modes will widen their opportunity to travel and access services. Easy to understand information will help encourage the use of public transport and improve accessibility.</p>	<p>+ +</p>

² Refers to policy number as described in Technical Note - Schedule of Policies.

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>School Travel (20) We will help people walk and cycle to Somerset’s schools and make the school transport service we provide more efficient.</p>	<p>Young People. Areas of high deprivation and low car ownership.</p>	<p>Improving school travel ensures that every child can access the education they require. Active travel can also improve awareness of road safety and increased exercise levels can reduce health inequality.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Road Safety (21) We will work with partner organisations, for example, by helping drivers and riders to improve their skills</p>	<p>16-24 year olds and 65+.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that these groups are particularly at risk of road accidents therefore improvements in road safety will be of particular benefit to them.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Stay Active (23) We will help people to be more active by giving them more opportunities to travel in a healthy way, such as by walking or cycling</p>	<p>Those with disabilities.</p> <p>Areas of high deprivation. Younger people Older people. Younger people Older people.</p>	<p>Walking and cycling may not be accessible to some individuals with certain disabilities. However the schemes used to improve these modes of transport will often be of benefit to all users – for example pavement/cycle path or signage improvements. The needs of people with disabilities should be considered on individual schemes to ensure there is not a negative impact.</p> <p>Improving the fitness of these particular groups in addition to the potential improvements in air quality (by reducing car usage) could improve overall health and help reduce health inequalities in these groups. Increased walking and cycling will increase road safety awareness.</p>	<p>-</p> <p>+</p> <p>+</p>
<p>Access to Health (24) We will talk to healthcare providers about transport plans, to help make it easier for people to access their services. We will</p>	<p>Those in rural areas and without access to a car. Older people. Areas of high</p>	<p>Improving access to healthcare will help to reduce inequalities in those groups that normally have difficulty accessing healthcare services.</p>	<p>+</p>

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

help to develop 'out of hours' transport to healthcare services.	deprivation. People with a Disability.		
The effect transport has			
Climate Change (2) We will publish an annual action plan explaining how we will lead Somerset's response to climate change. Transport will have an important part to play in this.	Older people.	Older people are more at risk of poor health from temperature extremes. Being proactive in preventing climate change may help reduce the likelihood of extreme weather and temperature events.	
Noise (12) We will manage the effect transport related noise has on our communities at problem locations. We will assess sites according to the Department for environment, Food and Rural Affairs' guidance and prioritise possible solutions.		No specific impact identified.	
Landscapes and Diversity (13) We will protect Somerset's landscapes and biodiversity by working to minimise the effect transport schemes have on them.		No specific impact identified.	
Air Quality (25) We will work to minimise the	Young people. Older people.	Children, the elderly and those with pre-existing respiratory and cardio vascular conditions suffer more as a result of air	+

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>effect any changes to Somerset’s transport systems have on air pollution. We will work with Somerset’s district and borough authorities to improve air quality in Somerset by encouraging partnership working and sharing best practice with our neighbours.</p>	<p>Areas of high deprivation.</p>	<p>pollution. Ensuring that air quality is improved will be of particular benefit to these groups.</p>	
<p>The things you need</p>			
<p>Rights of Way (9) We will work to maintain our Rights of Way network and improve the information available to help people use them.</p>	<p>Low car ownership. Areas of high deprivation. Those with physical disabilities.</p>	<p>Somerset’s Rights of Way are an important network of thoroughways used to access services and leisure by many groups. Not all of the network is accessible to those with physical disabilities, however the least restrictive option will be sought where gates and stiles require replacement and this will help to improve accessibility.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Emerging Technologies (11) We will consider how electric vehicles, responsibly sourced biofuels and other new technologies could help us meet our goals and challenges.</p>		<p>No specific impact identified.</p>	
<p>Sustainable Development (15) We will work with developers to ensure they take into account the way people travel, and how</p>		<p>No specific impact identified.</p>	

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

people travel, to access services.			
<p>Information and Communication Technology (16)</p> <p>We will promote the use of ICT to reduce the need to travel and increase people’s ability to access goods and services.</p>	<p>Rural communities. Older people. Those with disabilities.</p>	<p>For those people whose access is restricted by lack of transport, online access to services and good can greatly reduce inequality and social exclusion.</p>	+
<p>Parking (17)</p> <p>We will help improve parking facilities to encourage more sustainable means of travel. We will work to improve the management of parking and help plan new developments appropriately.</p>	<p>Those with disabilities.</p>	<p>Access to parking is an important issue for those with physical disabilities. The needs of people with disabilities will be considered on individual schemes and developments to ensure there is not a negative impact.</p>	
<p>Freight (18)</p> <p>We will help hauliers choose the most appropriate routes and work to improve communication between communities and the hauliers that serve them.</p>	<p>Rural communities.</p>	<p>Inappropriate use of roads, particularly in rural areas, can lead to road damage, increased maintenance and reduced road safety. Ensuring correct use routes can help prevent unnecessary damage and maintain safety levels.</p>	+
<p>Maintenance (19)</p> <p>We will maintain our network in a way that makes best use of the resources available.</p>		<p>No specific impact identified.</p>	

The ways you travel			
<p>Bus and Community Transport Services (3, 4,5) We will do what we can to maintain essential services in the early years of this plan and work to improve the way services work together and provide better bus information during its later years.</p>	<p>Rural communities. Women. Areas of low car ownership. People with a disability. Women. Older people.</p>	<p>Accessibility to services such as education, health, social care and employment through public transport is particularly important for these groups. Ensuring services are maintained is essential in preventing inequality and social exclusion. However, due to the budget restrictions expected in the first years of this plan full maintenance may not be possible. For this reason EqIA have also been undertaken as part of a separate review under the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan. These assessments will be available on the County Council’s website.</p>	
	<p>Ethnic minorities. People with a disability.</p>	<p>Better information provision of services available could improve sense of safety and encourage these groups to use public transport and improve their access to services.</p>	+
<p>Cycling (7) We will encourage people to cycle more by helping them to make smarter travel choices and get better cycling skills. We will support the provision of appropriate and well-connected cycling facilities.</p>	<p>Those with disabilities.</p>	<p>Cycling may not be accessible to some individuals with certain disabilities. However the schemes used to improve this mode of transport will often be of benefit to all users – for example cycle path or signage improvements. The needs of people with disabilities should be considered on individual schemes to ensure there is not a negative impact.</p>	-
	<p>Areas of high deprivation. Younger people.</p>	<p>Encouraging cycling and improving skill levels may allow access to services previously unavailable to these groups thereby reducing inequalities.</p>	+
<p>Walking (8) We will help people make more trips on foot and help people see</p>	<p>Those with disabilities. Older people.</p>	<p>Walking may not be accessible to some individuals with certain disabilities. However the schemes used to improve this mode of transport will often be of benefit to all users – for</p>	-

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

the benefits of walking		example path or signage improvements. The needs of people with disabilities should be considered on individual schemes to ensure there is not a negative impact.	
Rail (10) We will work in partnership with the rail industry and other stakeholders to encourage more people to travel by train. We will support better services, facilities, integration and improvements in the way people see train travel.	Those with disabilities.	Accessing rail services can be difficult for individuals with certain disabilities. It is important that the needs of this group are appropriately considered when working with the rail industry and its partners.	+
Car & Taxi (14) We will work to better manage the traffic on the roads and improve the most congested junctions and routes. We will work with developers to try and make sure new developments don't make conditions worse.		No specific impact identified.	
Motorcycling (22) We will promote safe and responsible motorcycling by working with our partners to deliver our road safety policy and helping to improve parking provision.	Men	Evidence shows that male motorcyclists are more at risk of road traffic accidents. Improving overall road safety for motorcyclists will particularly benefit this group.	+

*Refers to policy number as described in the technical note "Schedule of Policies"

Accessibility of Documentation

The FTP is aimed at members of the public and is written in clear easy English. The supporting Technical Notes have also been written in easy English but will, by their nature, include more complex ideas and terminology. These documents are aimed at Government bodies and transport professionals.

The FTP and all its supporting documents are available on request in other formats, such as large print, Braille, tape or disc, can be translated into other languages or talked through with an appropriate County Council Officer. The documents are available on the County Council website in both portable document format (pdf) and in html. The software package (Limehouse) used to publish the document in html is accessibility compliant, i.e. it can be recognised by assistive technology installed on an individual's computer (such as audio reading). There is currently no evidence that any specific group or individuals are disadvantaged in accessing the FTP document.

Equality of Engagement Process

There has been a great deal of statutory and non-statutory consultation through the FTP development process as required through the Guidance provided by the DfT. A full list of groups consulted can be found in Technical Note – Consultation Responses.

Physical Access

In terms of physical access to facilities during consultation, all locations have been wheelchair accessible and have been wheelchair and physical impairment friendly (such as easy use of parking and toilet facilities). We have had members of the public and members of specialist groups (such as Compass) who are wheelchair users and have not received complaints regarding the facilities provided.

Assistive Technology

During our consultation activity we have used facilities where hearing loops systems are available (although these facilities have not been requested or used).

Most of our consultations have been undertaken utilising electronically displayed visual presentations accompanied by verbal delivery. These visual presentations have been available in a printed version if requested.

Consultation Methods

Consultation was initially undertaken in Spring 2010 on the Goals and Challenges. A draft Plan was developed that reflected the results of the

consultation. Additional consultation was undertaken in Winter 2010 for the draft document and its supporting technical notes. This second consultation also helped steer the final versions before its final publication.

The first consultation was undertaken by a specialist third-party company. The company was provided with a summary profile of Somerset to ensure that different methods could be utilised to obtain a fair representation of the county's population. A significant proportion of the consultation was undertaken through on-street and online questionnaires. Experience from developing the previous Local Transport Plan highlighted that people with disabilities were a hard to reach group and so Compass, through its service level agreement (SLA), undertook additional focused consultation.

Analysis of the consultation data identified that there may have been inequality arising from the method of consultation where certain groups may not have been aware of or were unable to access the consultation material. Black and Ethnic Minority groups were identified as not specifically targeted in our distribution lists. To ensure fair representation this group was targeted in the next consultation through correspondence with the Somerset Black Development Agency.

Consultation response information is summarised below (please note that the data has not been tested statistically and relates to leaflet/questionnaire distribution):

Age: There was marginal over sampling of those aged 45 - 64 at the expense of those aged over 65 but otherwise the sample was broadly representative of the Somerset population.

Disability: 15% of the people classed themselves as having a disability compared to 18% in the Somerset Profile. However these groups are fully represented within our stakeholder groups and targeted consultation as outline above.

Race: All respondents were either White British or of white origin. This was not representative of the Somerset profile (4.8% are of ethnic minority).

Sex: The sample was representative of the marginal female bias inherent in the Somerset population.

The second consultation took the form of an online questionnaire; the response for this consultation is outlined below:

Age: There was marginal over sampling of those aged between 25 and 64 at the expense of the those aged between 16-24 and those over 65, otherwise the sample was broadly representative of the Somerset Population.

Disability: 14% of people who responded classed themselves as having a disability compared to 18% in the Somerset Profile. However as mentioned, these groups have been specifically targeted through other methods.

Race: 4% of respondents classed themselves as an ethnic minority. This is comparable to the Somerset Profile of 4.8%.

Sex: The sample was representative of the marginal female bias inherent in the Somerset population.

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

No questions were specifically asked about Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnerships, Religion or beliefs or sexual orientation.

The main purpose of the consultations was to check that people were in broad agreement of the main priorities and aims of the FTP. Analysis shows that the samples that responded broadly followed the profile of Somerset and was therefore representative.

Conclusion

Overall the FTP and its policies will improve equality and reduce social exclusion for Somerset's residents and visitors. A few areas have been identified that, without correct consideration, could have a negative impact on certain groups. To ensure that any negative impacts are removed or minimised it is recommended that a brief equalities impact assessment is undertaken on each of the 3-year implementation plans (which will outline specific schemes) and that appropriate measures are included as actions within the plans to ensure they undertaken during its implementation.

In the early years of this Policy, due to the current budget restraints, there may be additional, potentially negative, impacts identified. These issues are being addressed through a corporate equalities review as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Outcomes and recommendations from these reviews will be considered and included in the 3-year implementation plans where appropriate.

It is planned that the FTP will be updated over its 15-year life-span and it is recommended that a revised equalities impact assessment is also undertaken at those times.

HOW WILL THE ASSESSMENT, CONSULTATION & OUTCOMES BE PUBLISHED & DISSEMINATED?

Consultation & Outcomes

The full results of the consultation and its outcomes will be published as a Technical Note of the FTP (available to the public in hard copy at Council Information Points or electronically via the Somerset County Council website).

Equalities Impact Assessment

This assessment will be published as a supporting document to the FTP (available to the public in hard copy at Council Information Points or electronically via the Somerset County Council website). The assessments undertaken as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan will also be published on the County Council website. Any additional assessment required as part of

FTP Equalities Impact Assessment

the Implementation Plans will be published as a supporting document to the individual plans.

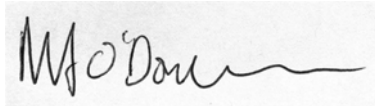
Results of the assessment will be communicated to Senior Management through the Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings and to members of staff through team meetings.

General Duty Re-Assessment: Medium

Re-assessment is required on each FTP update over its 15-year lifespan. Additional assessments are required on all FTP 3-year implementation plans.

SIGNED-OFF BY:

DATE:



20/01/11

Mike O'Dowd-Jones
Group Manager, Strategic Planning



20/01/2011

Adrienne Parry
Environment Equalities Champion
